

Message Text

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70

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 VO-03 SCA-01 EB-07 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PPT-01 H-02 SP-02 USIA-06 AID-05 NSC-05

CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 OPIC-03

XMB-02 EUR-12 L-03 /092 W
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R 180802Z SEP 76

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

INFO FAS/USDA WASHDC

USDOC WASHDC

SECSTATE WASHDC 3629

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BTRA, IZ

SUBJ: IRAQI VISAS FOR U.S. BUSINESSMEN

1. IRAQI COOL WEATHER SEASON (OCTOBER - APRIL) IS APPROACHING.
SINCE THIS ALSO COINCIDES WITH THAT PORTION OF IRAQI BUDGET CYCLE
WHEN GOI AGENCIES DO BULK OF THEIR PROCUREMENT, THIS IS PERIOD WHEN
U.S. BUSINESSMEN COME IN DROVES TO IRAQI.

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2. USINT IS RECEIVING GROWING NUMBER OF REQUESTS FROM U.S. BUSINESSMEN RESIDENT IN ACTION ADDRESSEE CITIES FOR ASSISTANCE WITH VISAS FOR IRAQ.

3. MFA HAS REPEATEDLY ASSURED US THAT, IN GENERAL, IRAQI CONSULAR OFFICERS WORLDWIDE ARE AUTHORIZED TO GRANT SINGLE ENTRY VISAS GOOD FOR THREE MONTHS TO REPUTABLE U.S. BUSINESSMEN WITH BONA FIDE REASONS FOR VISITING IRAQ -- WITHOUT REFERENCE TO BAGHDAD. EXPERIENCE SUGGESTS, HOWEVER, THAT IRAQI CONSULS INTERPRET THIS DIRECTIVE IN VARIOUS WAYS.

4. USINT SUGGESTS THAT COMMERCIAL OFFICERS AT ACTION ADDRESSEE POSTS CALL ON IRAQI EMBASSY COMMERCIAL OFFICERS (WHO OFTEN DOUBLE AS CONSULS) AND WORK OUT, IF POSSIBLE, INFORMAL SYSTEM OF INTRODUCING TO CONSULS REPUTABLE RESIDENT AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN WHO SEEK VISAS FOR IRAQ. THIS APPROACH WAS SUCCESSFULLY INITIATED IN SUMMER OF 1975 BY COMMERCIAL OFFICER AT AMEMBASSY BEIRUT.

5. ALTERNATIVE IS FOR USINT TO CONTACT IRAQI MFA AND/OR OTHER APPROPRIATE IRAQI AGENCY TO SPONSOR VISA APPLICANT, WHICH THEN SENDS CABLE TO IRAQI EMBASSY TO AUTHORIZE VISA. PROCESS IS BOTH ENORMOUSLY TIME-CONSUMING AND, ACCORDING TO MFA, UNNECESSARY.

6. IN APPROACH TO IRAQI EMBOFFS, U.S. COMMERCIAL OFFICERS COULD POINT OUT THAT THERE IS A USINT (BELGIAN EMBASSY) IN BAGHDAD (STAFFED BY EIGHT AMERICANS) AND AN IRAQI INTERESTS SECTION (INDIAN EMBASSY) IN WASHINGTON; THAT IRAQ IS WELL ON WAY TO BECOMING HALF BILLION DOLLAR ANNUAL MARKET FOR U.S. PRODUCTS; THAT USINT ISSUED NEARLY 1,000 VISITORS VISAS IN JULY TO IRAQIS; THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS HAVE RECENTLY REAFFIRMED TREATIES ON COMMERCE, NAVIGATION, AND ON CULTURAL EXCHANGES; AND THAT STATED GOI POLICY IS TO AVOID DISCRIMINATION AGAINST U.S. BUSINESS FIRMS.

7. IF PROPOSED OVERTURES DO NOT LEAD TO DESIRED RESULTS, PLEASE INFORM USINT AND WE WILL THEN GO TO MFA WITH FACTS. IN TIME THIS SHOULD LEAD TO EASIER ISSUANCE OF VISAS TO REPRESENTATIVES OF REPUTABLE AMERICAN FIRMS.

WILEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BAGHDA01365
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760353-1104
From: BAGHDAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760946/aaaabmys.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 MAY 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <17 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IRAQI VISAS FOR U.S. BUSINESSMEN
TAGS: BTRA, IZ
To: ABU DHABI AMMAN
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006